

Minister Appoints Supervisor to Manage Finances of Windsor Catholic Board

McGuinty Government Taking Action to Protect Students

NEWS

August 28, 2012

Ontario is appointing a supervisor to oversee the financial management and administration of the [Windsor-Essex Catholic District School Board](#), return the board to fiscal sustainability, ensure there are no labour disruptions in the coming year and to put the best interests of students first.

Norbert Hartmann has been appointed under the Education Act, effective Sept. 4, to:

- Develop and implement a balanced budget plan to return the board to a balanced financial position while protecting the best interest of students.
- Address the issues raised in [Deloitte & Touche LLP's Investigation Report](#) with a priority placed on reviewing the labour strategy, which includes the willingness of the board to endure strikes in order to meet budget obligations.
- Implement the recommendations in the PricewaterhouseCoopers Operational Capacity Report 2011.
- Respect the board's denominational rights, collective agreements and other financial contracts and obligations.

Effective immediately, Jim Grieve, Assistant Deputy Minister of the Early Learning Division in the Ministry of Education, will serve as an interim supervisor.

The appointment of the supervisor follows a practice in the board of running deficits and a determination by the ministry that the board is financially high risk. In each of the last two years, the board has posted operating deficits and is projecting another this fiscal year, despite support from the province. Funding has increased by over 30 per cent since 2003, with per pupil funding up 62 per cent.

As a result of these persistent financial challenges, the Ministry of Education asked Deloitte to conduct an investigation into the board's finances. Deloitte's investigative team recommended the appointment of a supervisor based on the board's inability to meet its financial obligations as a result of several factors, including:

- Inadequate financial management practices within the organization and insufficient management capacity.
- The lack of ownership and accountability of department heads for implementing budget initiatives and managing within their allocations.
- The absence of budget controls to facilitate departments spending within their budget allocations.
- A budget that is significantly reliant on a labour strategy that has financial and non-financial risks, including potential for disruption of school for students and staff.
- The financial impact of previous decisions, including unfunded capital construction.
- An inability to develop accurate budgets as well as an inability to develop timely and accurate reports throughout the year.
- The lack of communication and co-operation of key departments on important items such as staffing numbers and budget targets.

QUOTES

“Our government has a responsibility to take action when others who have been trusted with public dollars are consistently unable to manage them responsibly. The willingness of the board to endure strikes to meet its financial responsibilities was also of significant concern to me. My actions today will ensure that this board is put back on track so that it can make responsible decisions that are in the best interests of students.”

— Laurel Broten, Minister of Education

QUICK FACTS

- On July 26, 2012, the ministry appointed Deloitte & Touche LLP as investigators to review the finances of the Windsor-Essex Catholic District School Board.
- The government has the authority to place a board under provincial control, following an order by the Lieutenant Governor in Council, if an investigator examining the financial affairs of the board finds evidence for concern, such as an accumulated deficit.
- With over 35 years of experience in the education sector, Norbert Hartmann has held senior management positions in public and Catholic school boards and most recently served as chair of the Co-Management Team at [Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board](#) and supervisor for Toronto Catholic District School Board.

LEARN MORE

Read the investigators' [full report](#).

Read a [letter from Minister Broten](#) to parents of students in the Windsor-Essex Catholic District School Board.

Read the [history](#) of Windsor-Essex Catholic District School Board's finance and management review.

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